175 The map of the world has been changed a hundred times, and with it the map of Egypt; but fundamentals have not changed and the fellaheen have remained the same.

They have taken the strain of all these changes, and never flinched. Violent and repeated shocks have swept away whole peoples, as can be seen today from the ruins of North Africa or Chaldea, which stand deserted in lands peopled by an alien race. But the fellaheen have held firm and stood their ground.

The history of Egypt includes wars and revolutions in plenty, but the people have taken no part in them. Only at one period, between A.D. 725 and A.D. 830, is there any mention of risings in the countryside. Crushed by the taxation of their Arab conquerors, the fellaheen abandoned the villages where they were born and settled elsewhere. These evasive movements became almost general, but the repression was so severe that the Copts decided upon open revolt. Six times they rose, but without unity of plan or action. Six times they were savagely put down. They are not of the stuff of which rebels are made. Moreover, even in these revolts the mass of the people remained unaffected.

175 They are as impervious and enduring as the granite 178 of their temples, and as slow to develop, once established, as this form of art proved to be. The glimpses of their daily life which we get from the wall paintings of Pharaonic tombs or from Coptic legend, from Arab historians or the "Description of Egypt" (*), from early English researchers or the travellers of our own day, seem to form a single sequence. We get the impression that all these scenes, though separated by so many centuries, only repeat and confirm one another.

105 This is not merely an impression. We can see the fellah 178 using the same implements—the plough, the *shadûf*, the *saqia*, the winnowing-fork, the sickle and the straw basket; the same methods of treating the body—tattooing, circumcision, colouring with *kohl* and henna, plucking of hair; and many of the same marriage and funeral customs. Through the pages of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Maqrîzi, Vansleb, Père Sicard and Volney we can recognise the same fellah. No revolution, no evolution.